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ABSTRACT

The easiest way to isolate significant influences on the English teacher in the last 15 years and to assess the impact of research on classroom practice is to study the network of constraints and pressures surrounding the teacher. Some changes in direction and emphasis in education occur according to which political party is in power. The years from 1966 to 1975 saw a belief in the individual's capacity to grow and economic support for innovations in teaching. Since 1975, a change in government and downturn in the economy have reestablished rigid habits and societal myths in education. There are, however, four areas in English teaching that will never be the same. (1) Language and learning: more teachers are challenging students to solve their own problems, as the notion of the human mind scientifically hypothesizing becomes more acceptable. (2) Fiction and culture: the multicultural mix in classrooms calls for an inclusive rather than exclusive range in literature. (3) Function and form: the emphasis has shifted to the study of language use rather than language as an isolated exercise taken out of context. (4) Class and control: teachers are more aware of and better prepared to cope with the "middle classness" of schools and the "hidden curriculum" generated by cultural bias. (HTH)

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THE ENGLISH TEACHER, RESEARCH AND CHANGE

(1966-1980)

- Garth Boomer

(A worki
English g paper presented at the Third International Conference of
eachers, Sydney, August, 1980)

Before t
in the pying to isolate significant influences on the English teacher
classroost fifteen years and to assess the impact of research on
and pres practice, I shall briefly sketch the network of constraints
"The Cosmures which surround the individual teacher. Figure 1,
forces ac Egg of English Teaching", is an attempt to represent the
also attd counterforces which act upon the teacher of English. It
mpts to assess the strength of the various forces.

In this
subtle aper, I wish to use the analogy of ecology to indicate the
teachersteraction and interdependence of the system within which
'conformwork. I therefore find notions such as 'autonomy',
English ty' and 'independence' inappropriate for my analysis. The
web of teacher is pictured within, not necessarily trapped within, a
than othnsions. Some of these seem to me to have a higher valency
rs in terms of their power to shape what happens in schools.

The umbr
along willa of western/national/state politics and "ruling" ideology
in my vih economic (therefore technological and social) structure is
within ww the chief determiner of the "force field" or "egg shell"
with thiich English teaching is contained. In harmony or tension
coming f "macro" umbrella, I see an equally significant "micro control"
individuom the individual's "political/ethical profile". The
to be inl's belief system having been socially constructed is likely
subtle cbasic sympathy with the 'macro control' but, depending on the
may be imbination of all the other factors in an individual's life, it
various tension with this macro control at various levels and in
ways.

Many of
implicithe values and beliefs embedded in the macro structure are
decade tand tend to be reproduced unobtrusively from era to era,
decade as part of the "hidden curriculum" of culture.

A sub-se
which ac of these all-embracing 'habits', is the set of reproductions
English ompany the continuing generations of teachers, more specifically
myths wheachers. These tend to be indistinguishable from the general
teachingch lay-members of society perpetuate about teachers and
them durbecause the significant 'stories' are enacted as models for
truly iing their stay at school. Many of these myths are well and
representitutionalized and "reified" in public examinations, which
and in t established values, standards, and views of 'worthwhileness',
enshrinextbooks, commercially or institutionally produced, which
second cvarious contents and pedagogies. I see these influences as
der forces.

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THE COSMIC EGG OF ENGLISH TEACHING
(Garth Boomer, 1980)

(• indicates possible strength of influence)

FIGURE: 1

If these are seen as essentially conservative influences, then in possible tension with them I would see the solutions continually being generated at the level of praxis. Each moment of the life of classrooms is likely to pose a problem requiring a creative solution. Teachers deal with these problems by calling on their personal and professional resources, usually in tension or collaboration with their students. Slightly less immediately they may seek out help directly or indirectly from their teaching colleagues. The accumulated effect of solutions generated at the level of praxis may be to create a teacher consciousness which conflicts with aspects of the institutionalized pedagogies.

I therefore rate the influence of students and colleagues as 'second order' variables along with textbooks and examinations.

At a third order level I have rated the influence of a teacher's professional training (pre-service or in-service), of the system (through curriculum guides, advisers and conferences), of new theories and research, of the community (employers, pressure groups, parents) and of "superiors" in education (faculty heads, principals, inspectors, etc.).

There is plenty of room for debate about the relative significance of the factors which I have isolated. There are also, no doubt, other factors which teachers themselves would rate as significant. My assessment is largely subjective but I can call upon some aspects of my own research and the research of others to support the relatively low status which I ascribe to research and advisory work. This is not an argument for the discontinuation of research. My conception of research is that it is a crucial component in the various conversations of teachers, and of society, aspects of which conversations will eventually become part of the established mythos and thereby exert considerable influence indirectly on the course of education.

Having established my "ecological" map of the English teacher in context, I have a means of reading the past fifteen years of English teaching. My analysis will not yield the truth but it may help this commission towards a more subtle understanding of our history and our likely futures.

I shall proceed by writing notes on some of the factors I have isolated before dwelling more fully on research and change.

Western/National/State Politics and Ideology

I would contend that although we get some changes in direction and emphasis in education according to which political party is in power, the overall effect of party political change is fairly cosmetic, at least in Australia where politics tends to be prefigured by western philosophy, the economics of the USA and the desires of multi-national pressure groups. Certain shared values tend to prevail across political parties - a roughly Christian ethic, the belief in parliamentary democracy, the rights of 'free' speech, etc. When a Liberal government holds sway in Australia we see the metaphors of commerce, individual enterprise, competition and choice creeping into education. With a Labour government there comes an emphasis on

egalitarianism, social welfare and worker participation but economi constraints do not usually allow great advances.

Such overriding western ideals as technological 'progress', profit productivity, efficient use of time and resource, reward for effortnd pride in achievement, obedience, loyalty, rationality and justice a defined by the employers rather than the employed, permeate educati Those teachers who march to the beat of a radically different drummn. are either subtly contained or openly repressed. er

Because the ruling ideologies have changed little in the past fifty years, it is difficult to see much change in the ideals which are e explicitly or implicitly upheld in schools but there have been some ther interesting changes in mood which seem to have an economic and part political base.

I would characterize the perio 1966-1970 in Australian English tea as a breaking free from the hardened boundaries of English in terms shing content and style. There was a grass-roots reaction against the of imperialist policies which led to the idiocy of Vietnam. A new idealism and belief in the individual's capacity for growth arose a antidote to the inhuman atrocities of the war. Eventually, in s an Australia, this led to a change of Government.

English teaching reflected this questioning of society. The thema approach, the moves towards exploiting literature to ill inate curic social issues, the proliferation of courses offering choi , the urrent mining of public examination restrictions, all fitted the English der- teacher's growing disillusionment with the old order. The cheerfu economic situation meant that the "back to basics" push was fairly l feeble. Money for education was beginning to flow. Advisers wer unheard of in 1966. By 1970 all states in Australia were beginnir develop advisory networks. Creative techniques were invented to g to provide multiple sets of books, thereby breaking the stranglehold o the 'set' course. It was a time of liberalism. f

Looking back, I think it was a time when the house of English was redecorated and a few additions were built on. Despite the appear of change there were, however, no fundamental structural changes. ance architects and home owners just became a little more flamboyant and The daring. New gadgets and new ways of doing things evolved. Open classrooms, individualized work-sheets, cartoon-packed text books, space electives and excursions came into their own. Alternative courses also took hold. 'Catering for individual differences' was a popul slogan. ar

From 1970-74, money flowed even more generously. Innovation was economically supported as soon as the Labour Government took power, almost as if it were a good thing in itself. Schools (and English teachers) were encouraged, almost bullied into inviting community participation in education. The National Committee on the Teachir of English was established, along with a number of other national g committees, to do some future gazing and to recommend on the needs of the profession. After the 'flush' of breaking free, there was, at least at the 'conference going' level, a desire for knowledge, research, a sound conceptual base.

As Whitlam changed our national stance on foreign policy, English teachers also began to look outside. Visitors from America and England to various conferences helped to create the belief that there could be some international policies on English teaching.

Since 1975 a good number of fires have been put out or voluntarily have died. A change of government; a down-turn in the economy; unemployment; and we find ourselves in the present state of fear and guilt. We are being urged to go back, to conserve, to play safe, to tighten up, to cut down and to take control at the very time when we are beginning to understand our craft better; indeed, at a time of national ferment about language in education. We fear and doubt the things we almost did during the outbreak. We are guilty because we half-believe the myths that children cannot get jobs because of their spelling.

Language One is a political document, beautifully symbolizing that the ruling ideologies of law and order have been re-asserted after some minor aberrations.

Professional Habits and Societal Myths

Perhaps the best way to represent some of the tensions between professional habit and exploration in the last 15 years is to pose some of the polarities.

HABIT	POSSIBILITY
Using only acknowledged, 'good' literature.	Using any literature including 'pop' literature which will 'connect'.
Never giving full marks.	Giving no grading at all and simply responding.
Correcting every error.	Replacing teacher correction by student editing.
Using comprehension texts and language exercise books to teach 'grammar'.	Using no exercise books and working on actual scripts.
Seeing poems, plays and novels as the core of English.	Re-conceiving English as language study and development.
Getting students to write essays about writing.	Encouraging students to be authors in their own right.
Streaming classes according to ability.	Not streaming at all.
Teacher programming the work for students.	Students and teachers programming together.

HABIT	POSSIBILITY
Keeping the identity of English secure.	Discovering new ways of dividing knowledge, e.g. Humanities; Integrated Studies, etc.
Speaking and writing correctly at all times.	Developing flexibility in language codes and registers, replacing correctness with the notion of appropriateness.
Running a quiet orderly classroom.	Allowing for group discussion, debate and interchange.

Teachers in defining themselves within some of these polarities are forced to take account of "societal myths" about English teaching and learning. Here are a few of which I am strongly aware:

- Learning language is like building a house. You need a good basic foundation and then gradually brick by brick you can build the walls. Eventually it will be a good place to live in. (How can you write a sentence until you know how to build up all the parts?)

- Children learn by practice (drill) and imitation with reward for correctness and penalty for error. (If their spelling is not corrected they will develop bad habits - bad spelling today; heroin tomorrow.)

- English teachers should help children to speak properly and correctly and to write properly and correctly so that they can get a good job ("a better job than we parents had").

- English teachers should put good books in front of children, not books which deal with controversial social, sexual and religious issues.

- To pass English you have to know your facts and quotations and be able to write in sentences.

- Bad speech is a sign of slovenliness and bad citizenship.

It is, of course, dangerous to imply that all members of the community lean strongly towards these myths. My experience is that people are more than ready to alter their myths if the professionals convince them that they are wrong or misleading. Teachers, however, seem more than ready to cite societal myths for their own purpose. ("We'd like to do it, but the parents wouldn't like it.")

I am presently depressed because so many of my colleagues seem to be knuckling under to the perceived myths of society. We could, I believe, with effectiveness:

".. take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them."

Publishers

Nineteen hundred and sixty-six was the beginning of the end of centrally prescribed texts for English at the secondary level. Few were bold enough to suggest total school-based curriculum then but there was a strong groundswell of discontent with the pre-emptive central course, soon to be followed by rebellion even at prescription by the faculty head. Ironically, it seems that as the centre relinquished its hold on the content and spirit of English courses, the publishers moved in to provide the crutch, or the manacles, for the unskilled, the uncertain and the lazy.

The course book or various euphemisms for it ('source books'; collections; explorations) have always been a part of mainstream English teaching. It would be most interesting to test the relative influence of ruling ideology and research on the contents. My personal view is that there has been a clearly observable dialectic of textbooks in which the "habit" books have done battle with the new wave (and research oriented) texts. A brief examination of texts which have attempted to hold the middle ground over the past fifteen years gives some indication of the dialectics.

1966:	"English in Australian Schools"	- Ridout & McGregor
	"Using Better English"	- Allsopp and Hunt
1968:	"Reflections"*	- Clements, Dixon, Stratta
	"Themes and Responses"*	- Delves and Tickell
	"Voices"*	- Summerfield
1970:	"Sandals in One Hand"*	- Boomer and Hood
	"Personal English Programme"	- Rousch
	"Patchwork"*	- Carozzi
1972:	"Connexions"*	- Penguin Series
	"The Bad Deeds Gang"*	- Hannan & Tickell
	"Language in Use"*	- Doughty et al
	"English Today"	- Alsopp, Hunt et al
1974:	"Mastering Words" (revival)	- R D Walshe
	"Catalyst"	- Esta de Fossard
	"Your Move"	- Neil Fuller
1976:	"Smile On The Face of The Tiger"	- Sadler, Hayller, Powell
	"English for Life"*	- Davis & Spicer
	"Roll Over Shakespeare"	- Hayller, Powell, Sadler
1978 -80:	"Language and Communications"*	- Forsyth and Wood
	"Language 1"	- Sadler, Hayller, Powell
	"Inform"*	- Howard

The asterisk indicates books which I consider to be attempts to take account of certain emerging theories. "Reflections" for instance owes much to the work and thinking which inspired the Dartmouth conference. "Patchwork" attempted to bring Holbrook's work on literature and new insights into the reading process together in a textbook for the less able. "Connexions" was pushing the boundaries of English towards sociology in the name of relevance. "Language in Use" grew out of the

work of Halli
branch of lin
ay and his team and is therefore directly related to a
of sociolingu
uistics. "English for Life" attempts to apply aspects
Communicationstics, and is related in this attempt to "Language and
exercise type'. Counterpoised against these are the habitual
which go for books, variously dressed, or the "bob-each-way" books
he safe ground.

Clearly in 19
popularity po
0 the Language I, II, III, IV series is top of the
English teach
l, registering a dismal 'base' in the litmus test of
ers.

Not so clearl
language and
, indicated on my list is the larger battle between
Many of those
literature for the central ground, the 'core' of English.
surfeit of so
opposed to course books and disillusioned after the
novels, poetr
rce books are spending their money on 'primary sources',
'back-to-the-
', plays. This tendency might be seen as a parallel
might be seen
asics' move by the literature push. Conversely, it
textbooks as
as a radical and informed move by those who see all
effect.
patronising of teacher's heads and essentially toxic in

Research and The English Teacher

I have spent
much of the past five years talking with secondary English
teachers who
were seeking promotion to the position of faculty head.
It is one of
my aims in these conversations to assess the extent to
which the tea
her has read significant new works relevant to English
teaching.
also seek to engage the teacher in professional debate
about current
political and theoretical issues in English teaching.
Given that th
considered tese are teachers of some years' experience who are
to generalize
be competent in their craft, it seems reasonable for one
basis of thes
cautiously about English teaching and research on the
are my findi
interviews. (Approximately 150 in number.) These
gs:

- It is rare
for a teacher to be able to engage in detailed debate
about the
significance of advances in our understanding of
language l
earn
ng.
- Teachers
but few
may have heard of Britton, Barnes, Moffett and Halliday
still have
ve read them (apart from the odd quotations). Fewer
the work
the abili
y to discuss in detail the implications of
f these peop
e for English teaching.
- While many
education,
have been exposed to language theory in their pre-service
such a way
it seems that most have not retained what they did in
Attempts
that it can inform and shape their classroom practice.
o revive memories usually result in vague references.
- When chall
research,
enged to become engaged in consideration of theories and
that they
most teachers will unashamedly, some aggressively, say
of the
are essentially practitioners and question the usefulness
orists.

- Teachers are able to talk reasonably fluently on topics and slogans which have currency (Language Across The Curriculum; 'Remedial' Reading; Streaming; Course Books; "Back to Basics"). Their talk is informed by praxis and discussion with colleagues rather than by reading or attendance at courses.

- Central curriculum guides are not well known in most schools. They may have been read superficially but they do not provide a continuing reference point.

- There are outstanding examples of teachers with a well-articulated personal theory of English teaching, but, by and large, teachers are operating, effectively or not, on implicit notions.

These findings do not necessarily mean that I see English teachers negatively. My personal view is that English teachers will not be liberated and capable of finding cracks in their cosmic egg until they have developed a personally articulated set of principles and theories to justify, explain and inform what they do. This can happen without any reference to outside theorists. Some of the best teachers I know have got their act together by tenaciously examining their own practice and reflecting upon it without the aid of advisers, theorists and philosophers. On the other hand, I think even these teachers would benefit from the challenge of engaging with minds which bring a new perspective to the craft.

My findings do not lead to the conclusion that researchers and theorists have little effect on English teaching. Researchers are part of the ecological system and therefore everything they do must change the balance in some way. From my evidence, however, I do not see many direct relationships between researchers and teachers. More diffusely, indirectly and mysteriously the work of the theorists must have its effect on teachers and conversely the work of teachers must similarly contribute to the shaping of research. Perhaps the main task of this commission is to speculate on ways of bringing teachers and researchers into more direct partnership.

I have said that the theorists must affect English teaching. A brief analysis of the last fifteen years may help to justify my confidence. My comments on the textbook industry suggest one way in which theory comes to have a considerable influence on practice. But there seems to be a more subtle and probably more powerful dissemination process at work.

Perhaps I can explain it best by comparing researchers and theorists with story tellers. How do some yarns eventually become part of the mythos of a culture? How do stories spread? Why do some stories die?

The way I see the last fifteen years is that, as a profession, English teachers in varying degrees and sometimes in partisan factions have come under the spell of certain powerful weavers of tales. It is not the details of the research, the ins and outs of the plot, which remain with teachers; it is the ruling metaphors or frames of mind, the ideas, which have somehow caught their imagination and inspired them to be better teachers than they are. The story tellers are, of course, not just theorists and researchers. Politicians, principals, religious leaders, playwrights and teachers themselves can all claim the conch shell if their story is generative or compelling enough.

What catches fire, depends on the present state of the "eco" system of ideas and practice. It also depends on the ethical/political profile, the established frame of mind of those who listen to the story. Theory does not catch on because it is true but rather because it vibrates positively and sympathetically with the growing intuitions and beliefs of the teacher. Research which threatens the deep-seated personal constructs of a teacher will be rejected or not heard.

My hypothesis, then, is that the most influential figures in English teaching in the realm we have designated as "research and theory", are the metaphor makers. Let me name my team of top metaphor makers in the past fifteen years of English teaching. Noam Chomsky (the metaphor of the language generator); Lem Semenovich Vygotsky (the metaphor of dialetical language and thought); Susanne Langer (the metaphor of mind as symbol maker); George Mead (the metaphor of the social construction of reality); Michael Halliday (the metaphors of meaning potential and language as a tool); Jerome Bruner (the metaphor of language as amplifier of mind); Basil Bernstein (the metaphors of boundary and control). These people tell stories in their own right but most have come to influence English teachers through superb intermediaries, story tellers like James Britton, Frank Smith, Kenneth Goodman, John Dixon, David Holbrook, Harold Rosen, James Moffett, Lawrence Stenhouse, and Douglas Barnes to name some of the word-spinners who have set my mind afire. These tend to be wise generalists who can translate for teachers. Some of these metaphor makers and story tellers are also map makers offering to English teachers ways of analysing the territory of English teaching. Some of the most influential maps in the past 15 years have come from Britton, Barnes, Moffett, Halliday and Tough.

Then there are some story tellers themselves and some technicians who go on to invent tools for teachers which are a kind of do-it-yourself kit. Used well, these tools lead teachers to re-construe both their theory and their practice because of what the tool leads them to see. Striking examples are the Miscue Inventory which arose out of the Goodmans' work, the Barnes/Schemilt technique of analysing teaching style; Breakthrough to Literacy and Language in Use, the 'tools' which accompanied Halliday's work and anthologies such as Voices, by Geoffrey Summerfield, which exemplified a new understanding of the relationship between poetry and culture.

People like Harold Rosen, Nancy Martin and Lawrence Stenhouse have captured imaginations with their vision of teachers as story tellers. One of the most exciting advances of the past ten years has been the growth in "action-research" - teachers recording, documenting and reflecting on the life of their own classrooms. Slowly and significantly this will change the balance of story-telling power. Metaphors are being exchanged and evaluated:

> "It's a fine metaphor Professor Bernstein but it doesn't fit my classroom as neatly as you seem to suggest."

Maybe I am too close to this work, because of my specialist involvement, and this may lead me to be unduly optimistic about the new growth of teacher power. It is certainly a nice dream.

I am daunted but not depressed by the enormity of trying to put some tabs on the last fifteen years. It is good for me to try to tell the story. If I delude myself that there has been a discernible, if slow, march of mind, that there has been a lift in consciousness, then I must plead that I need thus to delude myself in order to stay with the cause.

In order to convince myself that we have "come a long way", I have isolated four areas in which, for the better, I think English teaching will never be the same again. Whether they know the sources of the stories or not, teachers owe a debt to some seminal thinkers and researchers.

Area 1: Language and Learning

The notion of language as resource for personal growth, popularized by John Dixon in Growth Through English is bound up with a conception of the way the human mind works. George Kelly inspired James Britton with his conception of the human being as born scientist hypothesising about the world and acting on these hypotheses. Chomsky, discredited as he may be on some scores, revolutionized our understanding of how language is acquired. The mind induces deep principles and generates infinite patterns. Vygotsky with a similar conception of mind, helped us to see the links between language and thinking. Bruner and the cognitivist psychologists are pushing this work further each year, all the time clarifying the role of the various media of symbolic representation in human learning.

If people like Kelly, Chomsky, Vygotsky, and Bruner are the metaphor makers in this realm, Frank Smith, Kenneth Goodman, James Britton, James Moffett, John Dixon and Douglas Barnes have been the popular story-tellers. Roger Brown, Courtney Cazden, Carol Chomsky, Gordon Wells and many others have also contributed lovely stories about language development which confirm the over-riding conception of the scientific mind.

At the level of the English classroom these stories have been realized in changed pedagogy. Directly or indirectly through the work of people such as Britton and Barnes, enlightened English teachers are providing more time and opportunity for student talk and interim formulation of thought in writing. So-called discovery or research methods relate to language and learning theories. Rather than telling or giving the rules, many more teachers in 1980, compared with 1966, are challenging students to solve their own problems, individually or in collaboration with their colleagues; and to discover underlying principles.

Of course, there have been some counter-productive misconceptions and misapplications of these theories. A loose understanding of "learning through language" has sometimes led to over-indulgent languishing in the process with no worthwhile territory to explore and no mind-expanding problem to solve.

Area 2. Fiction and Culture

This is an area where I am a little less sure about the effects on classroom practice. I am also a little less sure where the original metaphors have been forged. I am sure, however, that just as a clearer conception of language is emerging so there is an emerging [illegible] metaphor of storying which informs this paper is an indication of what I mean. The anthropologists and people like Susanne Langer have helped us to break the narrow bonds of Literature defined with a capital L. Whenever human beings begin to construct an image of life, a fiction, then they are using the "literary" function of language.

Just as archeology can help us to read a culture through its artefacts, so the unearthing of a culture's literature, not just its "museum" pieces, can help us to re-construct the texture of daily life. Leavis's view of literature and culture was a forerunner to new theories of literature and society but it lacked the generosity of including all literature. Raymond Williams and the Marxist literary critics such as Goldmann and Lukacs have helped us re-construe the extent and role of literature. Williams, in particular, has reminded us of the huge reservoir of working class literature which has previously been excluded from histories of literature and, of course, from classrooms.

And so, people like Harold Rosen and Raymond Williams have encouraged us to extend the range of literature read and made in classrooms. Rosen and networks of Inner London teachers have reminded us of the multi-cultural mix of classrooms and the need therefore to have an inclusive rather than exclusive view of literature.

At its best this influence on English teaching has led to less precious teaching of literature, more vigorous making of literature and more intensive mining of literature to unearth cultural and political meaning as well as plot.

Area 3. Function and Form

During the seventies in Australia, particularly since the arrival of Michael Halliday to our shores there has been an increasingly loud call to English teachers to take language, both in form and function, seriously. It is not just a resource, it is a rule-governed symbol system. Halliday, perhaps more than any other story teller, forces us to see language as part of a total 'context of situation'. He pictures human beings learning language in social interaction within the context of culture. The power of his conception of language, compared with that of other linguists, is the concerted emphasis on meaning. Taken from its context of situation and studied clinically, language is meaningless.

Halliday with James Britton is obviously a rare teacher as well as being a world authority on language. Teachers who study with him emerge taking language seriously and with strategies for translating the theory into the practice of English teaching.

It is a pity that many people see Halliday's view as opposed to that of Britton. Certainly Halliday reminds us, in contrast to Britton's emphasis on language as resource, of the importance of teaching about language, but his overarching metaphors are not sharply in conflict with Britton's.

At the classroom level, Halliday's work is being realized in approaches to language which emphasize study of all the functions of language not just literature, and study of the language in use not as an isolated exercise.

Perhaps the most exciting results of Halliday's influence can be seen in those classrooms where children are becoming their own researchers into the language of the community and the classroom. Study of the language, in this way, inevitably leads children to consider the appropriateness of language to situation, the falsity of the notions of correctness and the effect of relative status of participants on language exchange.

In this way, children are being given power through understanding how meanings are framed and exchanged in society.

Area 4. Class and Control

While Bernstein has been discredited or misunderstood, depending on your point of view, with respect to the early work on restricted and elaborated codes, there is no doubt that he has been one of our most exciting and influential metaphor makers. Directly or indirectly he has led English teachers in Australia to look closely at the way in which language is used to control, to exclude and to sort. He has forced us to consider the "middle classness" of schools and the effect which this has on the language and learning of those who have learnt alternative values and styles of meaning exchange. The term "hidden curriculum" takes on new meaning when examined in the light of Bernstein's work on the framing of knowledge. The very way we divide and package knowledge becomes a powerful weapon of control and imperialism in the realm of values.

My own work on 'negotiating the curriculum' is directly related to Bernstein's writing about the differential effects of explicit as opposed to implicit control. Control and styles of using power have always been pre-occupations of English teachers but Bernstein has helped to clarify the issues and to discredit the once popular view of the under-achieving child as deficient language user (as opposed to the view of the school as inadequate language environment).

English teachers through the work of Bernstein, and others such as Rosen, Shuy, and Halliday, are now more aware of the cultural bigotry of traditional schooling and the more enlightened are painfully working away at their ingrained linguistic and cultural prejudices.

The problem which Bernstein poses to English teachers is how to give children access to power. In order to teach this they must be able to demonstrate that they themselves know some of the secrets of access to power. They must be able to demonstrate their own ability to struggle and to question.

This brings me to a point where it is appropriate to stop. Teachers who are their own researchers will not be cowed by acknowledged theorists. They will tenaciously require those who talk profoundly or obscurely to yield their secrets. Once yielded, these secrets will be tested in practice. Your commission has the challenge of investigating ways in which teachers can have greater access to power. This will involve exploration of present blockages, impediments and restrictions.

The last fifteen years prove to me that English teachers are being affected by theory and research. What worries me is whether we English teachers are significantly more able to shape, control and reject the subtle influences which come at us. How well do we know our cosmic egg?